NCA
VOC FOR PGM/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 5-6070 AUGUST 9, 1978
AL GRIGIS

CHINA TALKS WITH JAPAN AND VIETNAM

ANNCR:

CHINA IS CONFERRING WITH JAPAN ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN, AND PEKING IS ALSO TALKING WITH HANOI ON PROBLEMS BETWEEN CHINA AND VIETNAM. AL GRIGIS HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT.

VOICE:

JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER SUNAO SONODA IS VISITING PEKING FOR TALKS WITH HIS CHINESE COUNTERPART, FOREIGN MINISTER HUANG HUA. THE SUBJECT IS THE LONG-POSTPONED CHINA-JAPAN PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY.

AS HE LEFT TOKYO, MISTER SONODA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WORKING-LEVEL TALKS ARE STILL BOGGED DOWN OVER THE PRECISE WORDING OF A PROPOSED STATEMENT IN THE TREATY AGAINST THE DOMINATION OF ASIA BY ANY ONE POWER. CHINA HAD WANTED A MORE POINTED REFERENCE TO THE SOVIET UNION, AND JAPAN HAS URGED THAT SUCH A STATEMENT NOT BE DIRECTED SPECIFICALLY AGAINST ANY THIRD COUNTRY.

IN AN INTERVIEW ON JAPANESE TELEVISION, MISTER SONODA SAID JAPAN SEEKS COMMON GROUND WITH CHINA ON THE BASIS OF NATION-TO-NATION RELATIONSHIPS IN A WORLD THAT HAS CHANGED. HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE PROBLEM OF THE FOUR NORTHERN ISLANDS BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE SOVIET UNION, NOTING THAT JAPAN IS CONFERRING WITH MOSCOW ON FISHING, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND OTHER ISSUES. MISTER SONODA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION ALSO HAVE PROBLEMS BETWEEN THEM, BUT THAT JAPAN AND CHINA'S PROBLEM WITH THE SOVIET UNION ARE BASICALLY OF A DIFFERENT NATURE. TALKS ON THE WORDING OF THE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY WILL CONTINUE AS BEFORE, HE SAID,

AND HIS MISSION WILL BE TO FOCUS ON ASIAN ISSUES OF COMMON INTEREST TO JAPAN AND CHINA.

MEANWHILE, CHINA AND VIETNAM HAVE OPENED NEGOTIATIONS IN HANOI AT THE VICE FOREIGN MINISTERIAL LEVEL ON THE ISSUE OF ETHNIC CHINESE LIVING IN VIETNAM. ALTHOUGH NO AGENDA WAS ANNOUNCED BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETINGS, OTHER ISSUES MAY WELL COME UP. PEKING HAS FOR SOME TIME EXPRESSED PUBLICLY ITS CONCERN OVER WHAT IT CALLS THE SOVIET UNION'S ATTEMPTS AT ENCIRCLEMENT OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. ALSO, CHINA IS SAID TO BELIEVE THAT HANOI'S FOREIGN POLICY INCLUDES THE AIM, WITH THE HELP OF THE SOVIET UNION, OF CREATING AN INDOCHINA CONFEDERATION.

ANOTHER SUBJECT BEING WATCHED BY OBSERVERS IS THE VIETNAM-CAMBODIA BORDER WAR WHICH HAS PLACED PEKING AND MOSCOW ON OPPOSITE SIDES -- CHINA SUPPORTING CAMBODIA, AND THE SOVIET UNION SUPPORTING VIETNAM ON THE OTHER. NO ONE KNOWS HOW MUCH WILL BE SAID ON THAT SUBJECT.

WJL/PY